

Assembly Bill No. 2803

Passed the Assembly April 7, 2008

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Passed the Senate June 26, 2008

Secretary of the Senate

This bill was received by the Governor this ____ day
of _____, 2008, at ____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to amend Section 6159 of the Government Code, relating to payments to public agencies.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2803, Horton. Payments to public agencies: court-ordered restitution.

Existing law authorizes a public agency to accept a credit card, debit card, or electronic fund transfer as payment for specified charges, including the payment of a court-ordered fee, fine, forfeiture, penalty, or assessment.

This bill would expand this authorization to allow a public agency to accept these designated instruments as payment for a court-ordered restitution.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION. 1. Section 6159 of the Government Code is amended to read:

6159. (a) The following definitions apply for purposes of this section:

(1) "Credit card" means any card, plate, coupon book, or other credit device existing for the purpose of being used from time to time upon presentation to obtain money, property, labor, or services on credit.

(2) "Card issuer" means any person, or his or her agent, who issues a credit card and purchases credit card drafts.

(3) "Cardholder" means any person to whom a credit card is issued or any person who has agreed with the card issuer to pay obligations arising from the issuance of a credit card to another person.

(4) "Debit card" means a card or other means of access to a debit cardholder's account that may be used to initiate electronic funds transfers from that account.

(5) "Draft purchaser" means any person who purchases credit card drafts.

(6) “Electronic funds transfer” means any method by which a person permits electronic access to, and transfer of, money held in an account by that person.

(b) Subject to subdivisions (c) and (d), a court, city, county, city and county, or other public agency may authorize the acceptance of a credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer for any of the following:

(1) The payment for the deposit of bail for any offense not declared to be a felony or for any court-ordered fee, fine, forfeiture, penalty, assessment, or restitution. Use of a card or electronic funds transfer pursuant to this paragraph may include a requirement that the defendant be charged any administrative fee charged by the company issuing the card or processing the account for the cost of the transaction.

(2) The payment of a filing fee or other court fee.

(3) The payment of any towage or storage costs for a vehicle that has been removed from a highway, or from public or private property, as a result of parking violations.

(4) The payment of child, family, or spousal support, including reimbursement of public assistance, related fees, costs, or penalties, with the authorization of the cardholder or account holder.

(5) The payment for services rendered by any city, county, city and county, or other public agency.

(6) The payment of any fee, charge, or tax due a city, county, city and county, or other public agency.

(7) The payment of any moneys payable to the sheriff pursuant to a levy under a writ of attachment or writ of execution. If the use of a card or electronic funds transfer pursuant to this paragraph includes any administrative fee charged by the company issuing the card or processing the account for the cost of the transaction, that fee shall be paid by the person who pays the money to the sheriff pursuant to the levy.

(c) A court desiring to authorize the use of a credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer pursuant to subdivision (b) shall obtain the approval of the Judicial Council. A city desiring to authorize the use of a credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer pursuant to subdivision (b) shall obtain the approval of its city council. Any other public agency desiring to authorize the use of a credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer pursuant

to subdivision (b) shall obtain the approval of the governing body that has fiscal responsibility for that agency.

(d) After approval is obtained, a contract may be executed with one or more credit card issuers, debit card issuers, electronic funds transfer processors, or draft purchasers. The contract shall provide for the following matters:

(1) The respective rights and duties of the court, city, county, city and county, or other public agency and card issuer, funds processor, or draft purchaser regarding the presentment, acceptability, and payment of credit and debit card drafts and electronic funds transfer requests.

(2) The establishment of a reasonable means by which to facilitate payment settlements.

(3) The payment to the card issuer, funds processor, or draft purchaser of a reasonable fee or discount.

(4) Any other matters appropriately included in contracts with respect to the purchase of credit and debit card drafts and processing of electronic funds transfer requests as may be agreed upon by the parties to the contract.

(e) The honoring of a credit card, debit card, or electronic funds transfer pursuant to subdivision (b) hereof constitutes payment of the amount owing to the court, city, county, city and county, or other public agency as of the date the credit or debit card is honored or the electronic funds transfer is processed, provided the credit or debit card draft is paid following its due presentment to a card issuer or draft purchaser or the electronic funds transfer is completed with transfer to the agency requesting the transfer.

(f) If any credit or debit card draft is not paid following due presentment to a card issuer or draft purchaser or is charged back to the court, city, county, city and county, or other public agency for any reason, any record of payment made by the court, city, or other public agency honoring the credit or debit card shall be void. If any electronic funds transfer request is not completed with transfer to the agency requesting the transfer or is charged back to the agency for any reason, any record of payment made by the agency processing the electronic funds transfer shall be void. Any receipt issued in acknowledgment of payment shall also be void. The obligation of the cardholder or accountholder shall continue as an outstanding obligation as if no payment had been attempted.

(g) Notwithstanding Title 1.3 (commencing with Section 1747) of Part 4 of Division 3 of the Civil Code, a court, city, county, city and county, or any other public agency may impose a fee for the use of a credit or debit card or electronic funds transfer, not to exceed the costs incurred by the agency in providing for payment by credit or debit card or electronic funds transfer. These costs may include, but shall not be limited to, the payment of fees or discounts as specified in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d). Any fee imposed by a court pursuant to this subdivision shall be approved by the Judicial Council. Any fee imposed by any other public agency pursuant to this subdivision for the use of a credit or debit card or electronic funds transfer shall be approved by the governing body responsible for the fiscal decisions of the public agency.

(h) Fees or discounts provided for under paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) shall be deducted or accounted for prior to any statutory or other distribution of funds received from the card issuer, funds processor, or draft purchaser to the extent not recovered from the cardholder or accountholder pursuant to subdivision (g).

(i) The Judicial Council may enter into a master agreement with one or more credit or debit card issuers, funds processors, or draft purchasers for the acceptance and payment of credit or debit card drafts and electronic funds transfer requests received by the courts. Any court may join in any of these master agreements or may enter into a separate agreement with a credit or debit card issuer, funds processor, or draft purchaser.

Approved _____, 2008

Governor